7:Tucker E5 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Nilotes FJ2

N 126 524 533 while lastly enters into the rhythm. It is this factor which is often overlooked by those who take and analyze gramophone records of native songs. It is difficult for a native to sing in proper tempo and with true gusto when he has to keep his head half buried in a phonograph horn all the time; and phonographs are notoriously bad for chorus work, as is well known. Phonographs have their use, of course, where difficult note intervals are met with, as will be obvious from several of the songs recorded here.

N 533 The words of the songs count for little, often having nothing to do with the action of the games; some are mere eulogies on crops or cattle; sometimes a song is slurred out of recognition, and can only gain intelligibility after thorough dissection on the part of the investigator at a later and calmer period. In this aspect the Shilluks and Nuers are the greatest offenders, some of their songs consisting of mere nonsense syllables, which they themselves do not pretend to understand. (In such cases they usually give out that the words are "Dinka.") This being so, the translation of the vernacular given here, where this has been possible, must be regarded as very "free," as more attention has been paid to the song rhythm than to the literal meaning of the words.

S [533] N 171 It is remarkable how much similarity there is between European children's games and the games that the children play, almost as though there were a sympathetic tie between children the world over. But it is worth noticing that we have lost much of our children's music, as witness the number of our games which are played without song. For the sake of simplicity, I shall classify these games roughly under the title of their nearest European equivalent.

N 128 [*Note on the musical notation.*] Although the following tunes have been transcribed in staff notation, it must be noted that the scale intervals in the native singing voice are different from, and probably finer than, those on the piano (which have been compromised to enable one to play in different keys). Hence this rendering must be regarded as only *approximate*; where there is any appreciable difference between the sung and the written note, I have indicated this in the text, the "uncertain note" being marked with an asterisk.

I have also taken liberties with the shape of the notes in those songs where strophe and antistrophe are important. Thus: *Strophe*: words in italics and notes with tails up; *Antistrophe*: words in normal script and notes with tails down. Where there is no part singing, I have transcribed the words in normal script.]

RING-GAMES.

S 524 [516] The great majority of singing games necessitate the players' squatting or standing in a ring, therefore I shall begin with a description of the principal squatting games.

1. *Hand the slipper.*—The "slipper" in this case is a ring or bangle, which is passed from hand to hand. Fig. 1, Pl. XV, shows the game as played among the Shilluk. The children sit round

[1] I am very much indebted here to Miss Ursula Nettleship, who kindly read over this article in manuscript and offered constructive criticism with reference to the notation.

7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Acholi FK4
BARI FJ5
Latuko FJ17

S
524

in a ring, their feet under them. One of them has the missing bracelet, which he passes round surreptitiously. The leader sits in the middle and sings: "Bracelet of my son's wife," and the rest join in: "I want, I want now. Bracelet of poor Bana. It is lost." They slap their knees on the first beat of each bar.

S
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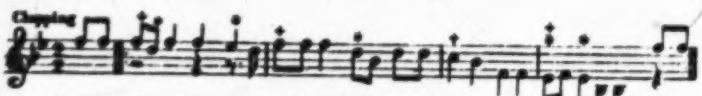

The leader may turn to any member of the circle, and, instead of slapping with his hands, lays them palm upwards on his knees: the boy now challenged has to lay his hands down palm upwards during the chorus. If he has the bracelet, he has to sit in the circle.

[*Note.* In the foregoing song there is a note which I have written sometimes as D and sometimes as E♭. In reality the note lies halfway between the two notes recorded. This, of course, does not refer to all Shilluk songs.]

The Acholi version shows a simpler scale:

A
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The following song, taken from the Latuko, illustrates how the clapping rhythm can differ from (to our ears) the natural song rhythm:—

L
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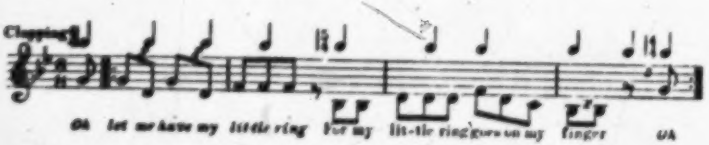

Among the Bari, the game is played with the legs stretched out in front, while the players sit in a line. One boy hides the ring, and the seeker is confused by the rhythmic jigging of the players' knees. (*See Fig.* 2, Pl. XV.)

B
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533
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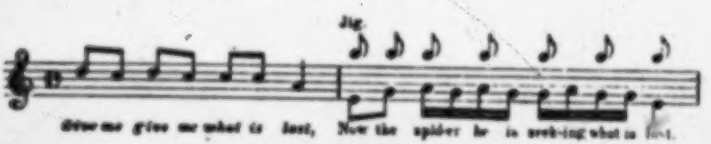

7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Dinka FJ12
Jur FJ14

D
524
516

The Dinka have a version similar to the above, but without song. The boys sit in a circle with their legs pointing inwards and their feet touching each other, so as to form a circular enclosure, which is called the "pot." Into this pot grass and bits of stick are put by the principal player, who then walks away. As soon as his back is turned, the boys grab what is in the "pot" and hide it. The principal then returns and asks each boy in turn who has stolen his dinner, whereupon it is up to each to give him a witty answer.

S
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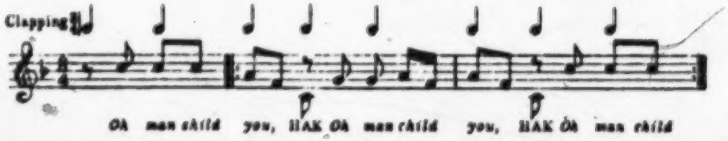
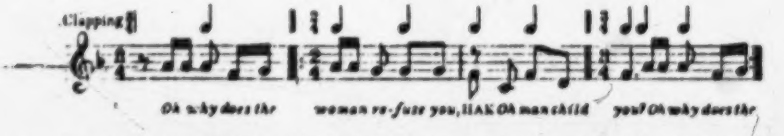
2. "*There stands a lady on the mountain.*"—There is a kneeling game, played by Shilluk boys and girls, which I have named as above, for want of a better name. The children sit in a fairly wide circle, with two gaps, facing each other. One girl sits in the middle. Two boys stand outside the ring, opposite each other. The song leader (either a boy or a girl) sings (in 3/4 time): "Oh man child you," and the chorus about "Hak" on the second beat.

Meanwhile the two outside boys walk to one of the gaps and flip their fingers at each other, then to the other gap and flip their fingers again. After a while the song (and rhythm) changes to:—



and one of the boys walks into the circle and marks time in front of the girl. If she does not approve of him, she will turn away from him, and he will try to stand in front of her two or three times, but she will always turn away. Soon the boy will give up trying to attract her attention, and will walk outside the circle again, and the first song will be sung till it is time for the second boy to enter the ring. If she refuses him too, new boys have to be chosen. If she approves of him, she will gently stroke his legs with her hands, while he marks time in front of her, till the music changes back to the first movement. Each boy usually tries three or four times, and very often a boy who has milady's favour at one time, might find himself given the cold shoulder the next time, especially if the girl is afraid of being chaffed about him after the game.

S
524
832

J
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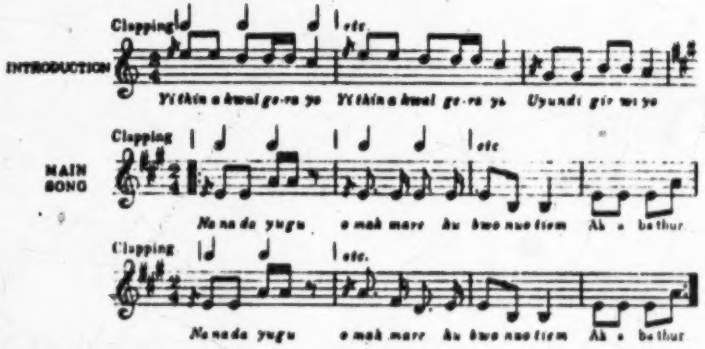
171

3. The following kneeling game was obtained from the Jur.[1] The formation is something like "Hunt the slipper" among the Shilluk, but there is no bracelet. The centre person will sing, and the rest join in, slapping their hands on their knees.

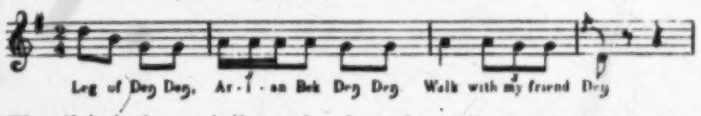
[1] A Shilluk-speaking tribe in the Bahr-el-Ghazal, in close cultural contact with the Dinka.

7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Jur PJ14
Dinka FJ13

Clapping
INTRODUCTION
Yi thin a kwai go-ra yo Yi thin a kwai go-ra yo Uyundi gir wi yo
Clapping
MAIN SONG
Na na da yugu o mak mare du two nae tiem Ak a ba thur
Clapping
Na na da yugu o mak mare du two nae tiem Ak a ba thur

[The main part to be repeated *ad lib.*, with occasional reversions to the introduction.]

On the "Ak" the man in the centre will suddenly slap the knees of one of those sitting round. The player must at once place his hands on his chest out of reach. If he is not quick enough and his hands are slapped, he is banished from the game. This continues till only one man is left, who is proclaimed the winner.

4. Another game, requiring a man in the centre, is played by the Dinka. The man crouches, while the rest stand closely round and over him, with their arms round each other's necks, so that he is enclosed in a cage of bodies. In his crouching position he can see only their legs. He grabs a leg at random, and cries, "Whose leg is this?" Should the owner of the leg be called, for example, Deg, the boys bawl in chorus:



[Thus, if the boy's name is Mayan, they shout "Leg of *Mayan*, Arian Bek *Mayan*, walk with my friend *Ma!*"]

He now grabs the next boy's leg, and so on, till all the boys' legs have been touched. When he has gone the round, he has to try to creep out of the circle, and the game usually ends in a rough and tumble.

5. "*Kwa deema dima do.*" The Shilluk version is the most complicated. The boys sit in a circle, or, it might be, a right-angle, with their feet stuck out straight in front of them. An older boy squats on his haunches before them and chants a queer formula, much longer than any European equivalent, tapping the feet as he chants, till the last word is said. The foot last touched is "out" and the owner must sit on it. He goes on in this way till everybody is sitting on both his feet, *i.e.*, practically kneeling. He then begins with the first boy of the line. There is a formula and response, and then he bows down in front of the boy with his eyes shut and his head almost touching the boy's knees. The boy has to stand up without

7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Dinka FJ12
Jur FJ14

S
524

touching the man's head with his knees. (He may use his hands to help himself, if he wishes.) If the man hears the boy's knees creak as he rises, the boy is made to stand on one side. If his knees do not creak, he stands somewhere else. Soon we have two groups—creaky and non-creaky knees. (Of course, the longer one is forced to sit on one's feet, the greater the likelihood of creaky knees!) The last part of the game is vague, because it was difficult to get the words. The two groups throw challenges at each other, and the game ends with the non-creaky knees pursuing the creaky knees and punishing them.

D
J
524

In the Dinka and Jur versions, a player is out of the game as soon as both legs are "out," and the game proceeds till only two boys are left. These are allowed to stand, but are well hemmed in by their neighbours, because the last man will have to make a dive for safety or be well pinched by his comrades.

J
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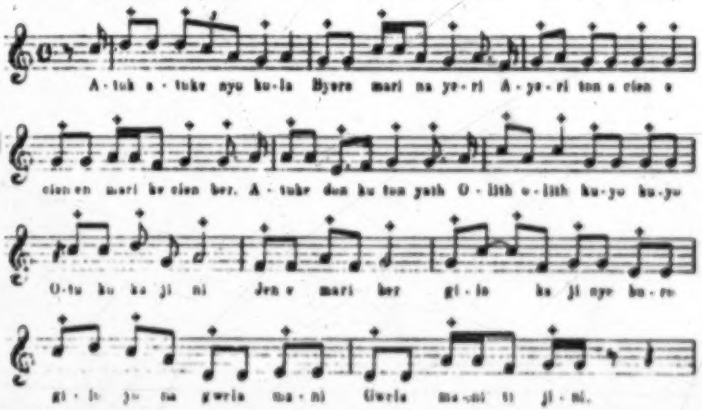
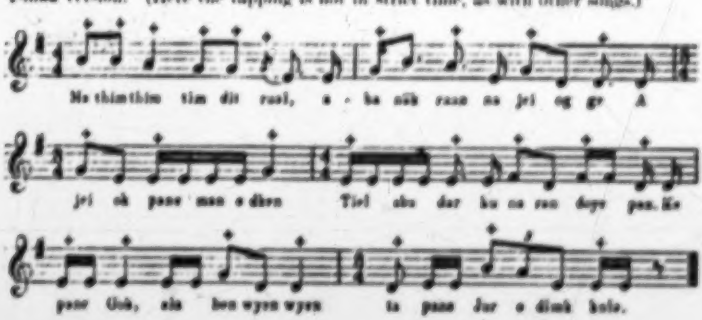
The Jur song is given here (| indicates the notes on which the feet are tapped): —

A-tuk a-tuke nyu ku-la Byere mari na ye-ri A-ye-ri ton a cien a
cien en mari kv cien ber. A-tuke dun ku ton yath O-lith o-lith ku-yo ku-yo
O-tu ku ka ji ni Jen e mari ber gi-le ka ji nye ku-re
gi-le ye te gwela ma-ni Gwela ma-ni ti ji-ni.

Dinka version. (Here the tapping is not in strict time, as with other songs.)


Ne thimthim tim dit ruol, a-ba nik raan ne jei ag ye A
jei ek paac man e dhon Tiel abu dar ku ca ran dayc pan. Ke
paac Guk, ala ben wyen wyen ta paac Jur e dimk kolo.

7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Bari FJ5

B
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533
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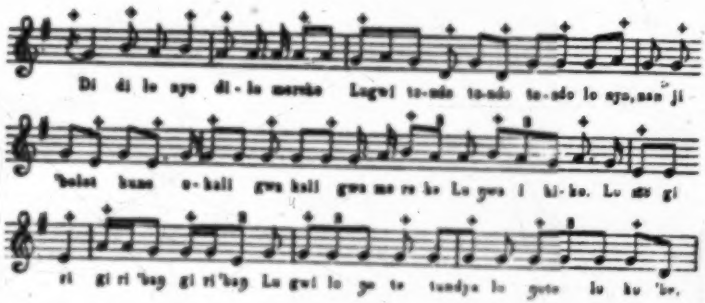
The following counting-out song is most difficult to scan, and was obtained from the Bari-speaking Pöjulu. (It was impossible to try to divide this song into "bars" in a musical sense; the "bars" here merely indicate phrases):—


Di di le ayo di-la mereko Lugwi to-ndo to-ndo to-ndo le ayo, nan ji
'bolot kuno o-kali gwa kali gwa me re ke Le gwa i ki-ko. Le ats gi
ri gi ri 'bag gi ri 'bag La gwi le ge te tundya le gete le ku 'be.

S
524
[516]

6. "*Simon says 'thumbs up!'*." A very peculiar Shilluk game which necessitates sitting **in a circle with the legs straight in front; may be likened to "Simon says 'Thumbs up!'"; except that the action is done with the toes. The boys sit round in a sort of circle with their feet stretched out in front of them to meet in the centre, like the spokes of a wheel. The shape of the "hub" of the wheel is, however, square, not round; so, for this game, eight, twelve or sixteen is a good number for the players. Outside the ring, on opposite sides of it, stand two men with clubs. The song-leader sits with the rest.**

S
524
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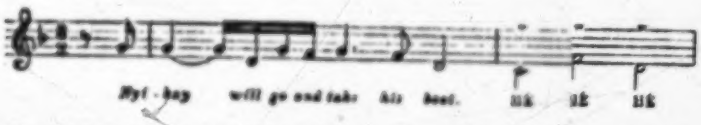
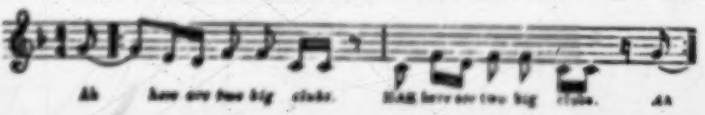
First movement: **Song-leader sings, "Nyikay was about to seize his boat." The boys all lean forward and grab their toes, keeping their knees stiff, while they chant: "Heigh! Heigh! Heigh!" (Fig. 3, Pl. I.)**

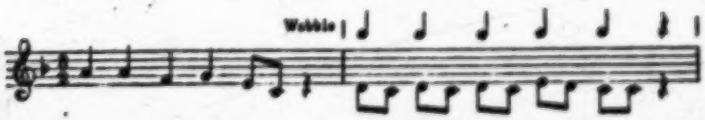


Second movement: **Song-leader sings, "Here are two clubs!" The boys quickly draw their feet back and sing, "Hak! Here are two clubs!" *At the word* "Hak," the two men, who are standing outside the ring, whack their clubs in the middle of the ring, so that, if any boy is so unfortunate as not to draw his feet back quickly enough, he gets a painful crack over his bare toes, and has to put up with the derision of his playmates as well. This song, both in words and tune, is very like the first, so the boys have to be on the alert. (Fig. 4, Pl. XV.)**

7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Nuer FJ22

S
524
533
539

Third movement: The boys all chant together "Open and shut, Open and shut!" At the word "Open," all the toes are bent backwards, at the word "Shut" they are all bent forwards, so that the centre square of toes looks like some great black sea-anemone opening and shutting itself.

Fourth movement: Keeping their feet and toes still, the boys wobble their knees rapidly up and down. I was unable to get the words of this song, but the tune is as follows:—



These movements can come in any order, according to the will of the song-leader.

N
524
516

7. Nuer girls are fond of ring games, but there is little action in those that I have seen. The girls kneel in a ring; one girl sings a song of about three lines, and the rest repeat it, clapping their knees. Then the girl next to her takes up the song, extemporizing upon the same theme with a view to scoring a "hit" off one of those present. If she succeeds, she is greeted with yells of approval, and all join lustily in the chorus, while the third girl cudgels her brains for the inspiration necessary to cap this verse if possible. These witticisms usually lie around the names of friends or bear some obscure reference to well-known incidents, with the result that an investigator without intimate knowledge of the children's daily affairs finds the songs unintelligible. This is one of the verses:

N
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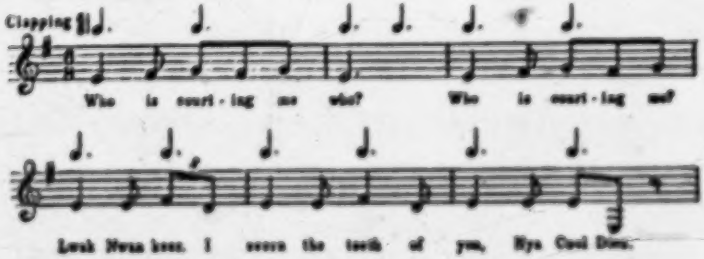
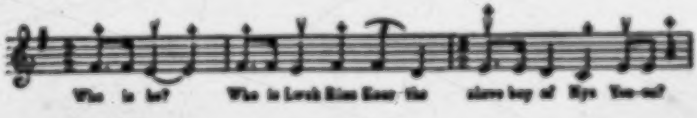


In the following song the voice rhythm (indicated V) differs markedly from the clapping rhythm (indicated ♩):



7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
FJ22 Nuer
FJ18 Mitta

N
524
533
539

The following singing game requires rapid thought and great memory. Each girl in turn has to think of a different animal's name, the aim being not to repeat the name a previous girl has sung:—

8. *Ring o' Roses.* There are many games which comprise mere dancing or capering in a ring. In the following Baka game the players first dance round in a ring, holding hands, singing:—

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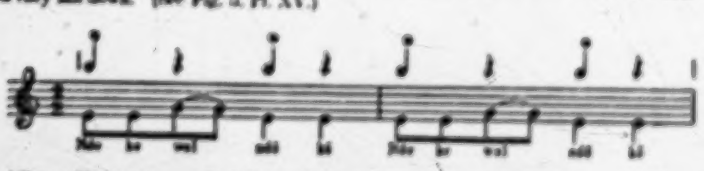
Then, with a change of the music, they swing their right legs over their arms, and hop round until they fall down. (*See* Fig. 5, Pl. XV.)



[*Note.* The note transcribed E sounds somewhere between E and F.]

9. A popular form of "Ring o' Roses" is played as follows. The Shilluk version has two parts, but the words of the song have no decipherable meaning. (Here again I found a note which was difficult to place. I have transcribed it sometimes E and sometimes F.)

S
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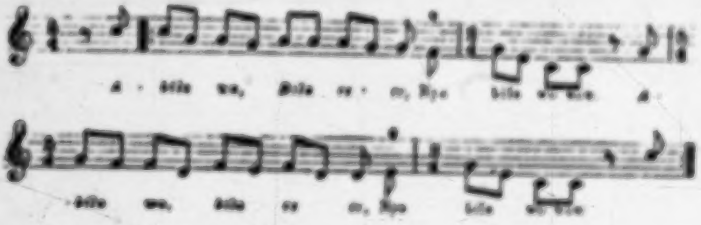
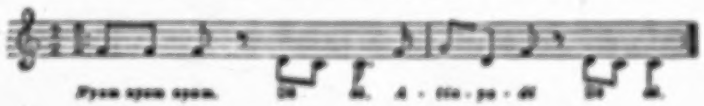
First movement: The players stand in a circle with hands on each other's shoulders, and sway as they sing:—



7:Tucker E-S (1929-1933) 1933 F323 Shilluk F323
Achol. FK4
Bari FJ5
Lotuko FJ17

S
524
533
539

Second movement: The leader will drop his hands and run round the boy to his right and back to his place. (*See* Fig. 6, Pl. XV.) This boy will now run round the boy to his right, and so on, until everybody has run round his right-hand neighbour, and no one is left with his hands on his neighbour's shoulders. After which the children revert to the first movement. The song for the second movement is sung at almost twice the speed of that for the first movement.



A
L
B
524

Among other tribes, only the second movement is gone through. In the Lotuko song I have transcribed the " uncertain note " sometimes as A and sometimes as Bb.

Lotuko:

L
524
533
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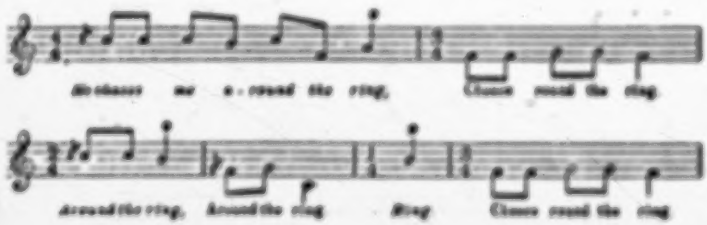
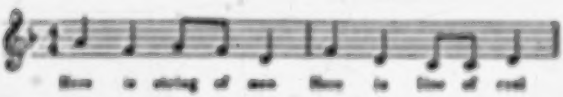

A
533
539

Acholi:



Bari:

B
533
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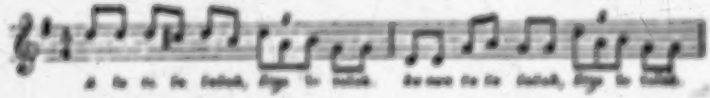


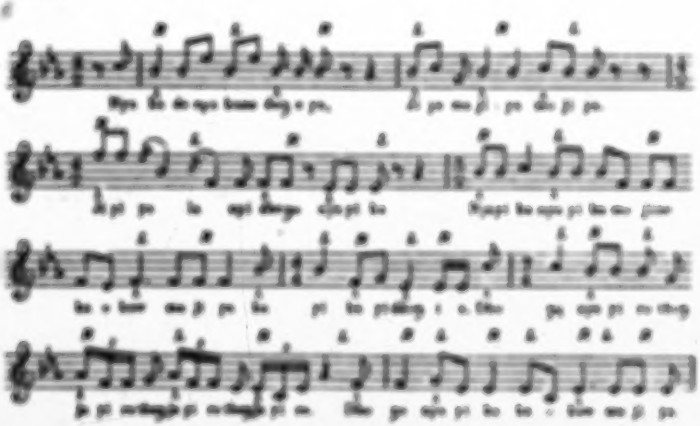
S
524

31. The following Shilluk ring-game is a fifth-rate test for the players' rhythmic sense, and many Shilluks fail, much to the derision of their comrades. The players stand in a ring, holding each others' shoulders, and a stick, about three feet long, is laid on the right-hand side of one of the boys, pointing towards the centre of the circle. The players now sing a supposedly " Shilluk " song, and the boy marks the rhythm by springing, with both feet together, to and fro across the stick. At a certain point in the song, to be determined by himself, he must

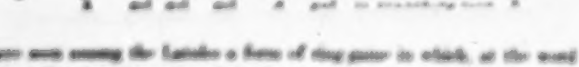
T/Tucker, E-S (1929-1931) 1933 - F321 Shilluk F321
Lotuko F317

double his time, *i.e.* spring from side to side twice as fast, and on the last note he must end up on the right-hand side of the stick, *i.e.* opposite the side from which he began, so that the circle may move round one pace, while his left-hand neighbour has an attempt. Should the unfortunate dancer finish up on the left-hand side of the stick, he is hooked out of the game.

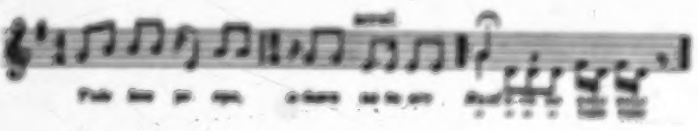
In the following song I have indicated by the letters R and L the jumpings, right and left, of one of the successful players. This is, of course, not the only way in which the rhythm is distributed:—



11. Another Shilluk jumping game consists merely of springing from the ground to a rapid rhythm, the legs going apart and together. An important point is that the left heel should hit the right ankle when the feet come together in mid-air.



12. I have seen among the Latuko a form of ring game in which, at the word "come!" the song-leader will swing his section of the line into the middle of the circle. When this is done very vigorously, it is hard for those on his immediate left and right to keep their feet.



? Tucker E-6 (1949-1933) 1933 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23
Lohuko FJ17

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13. The Lotuko have two ring-games, in which a boy in the centre is "on." In the first he is called "the ape," and the other players are supposed to dance from one foot to the other as they sing:—

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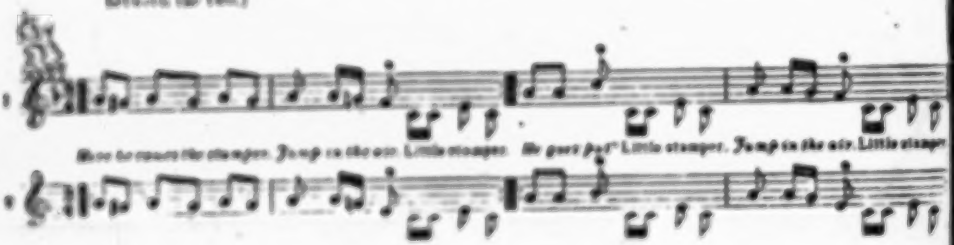
The "ape's" ambition is to grab the leg of one of the players and to upset him backwards. The player's neighbours try to prevent this by supporting him. If the "ape" succeeds, the upset player takes his place.

In the second game, the boy in the middle tries to jump on the toes of those who are not quick enough in jumping out of the way. (This song was difficult to transcribe, owing to the main notes being between E and F. Consequently I had the impression sometimes that the song was sung in the key of F major (No. 1), and sometimes that it was sung in the key of A minor (No. 2). I append both apparent versions. The true version was probably somewhere between the two.)



Chases and Following Games.

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14. *Fox and Geese.* This version of an old favourite is appropriately named "Lion and Goat," "Leopard and Sheep," "Leopard and Dog," according to the locality of the tribe concerned.

The Shilluk game is nearest our conception. The "Sheep" crowd in single file behind their leader, who faces the "Lion" all players crouching on hands and knees. (See Fig. 1, Pl. XVI.) The spectators supply the song and clap their hands in time. At every beat the Lion advances a pace, pouncing alternately from right to left and grunting "Ha!" and "Ha!" at each pounce. The line of Sheep crouches in time with him, bleating "Be!" to his grunts, and the leader has to prevent the Lion from catching one of the Sheep by blocking his path. Both sides have to start time with the music, and no irregular pounces are allowed.

7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 F323 Shilluk F323
Nilotes FJ2
Dinka FJ12

Of the two songs recorded here, only one of them has any reference to the game in the text.

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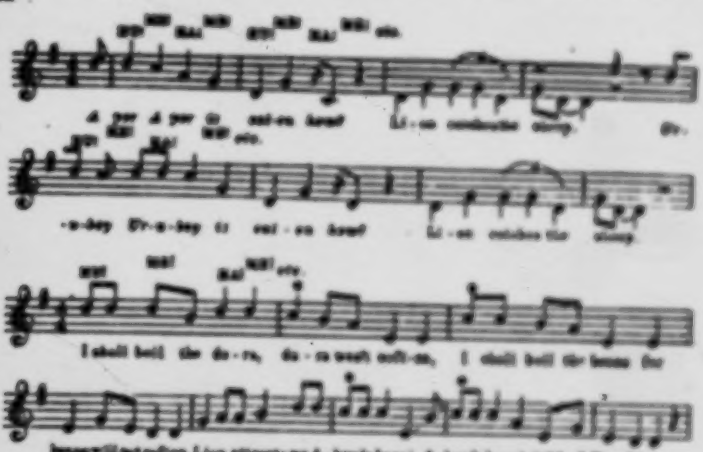

Among other tribes the game resembles more our game of "Cat and Mouse." The singers stand in a large circle, holding hands. The Leopard has to chase the Sheep in and out of the circle, the two calling to each other with growls and bleats. The Sheep is allowed to rush in or out under the singers' arms, but the Leopard's progress is barred as far as possible, and he has to try to break through. When caught, the Sheep becomes Leopard, and a new victim is sought.

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The singers incessantly jog from one foot to the other during the game, as we Africans can stand still while singing. Here again the words of the song need have no reference to the game.

Dinka:

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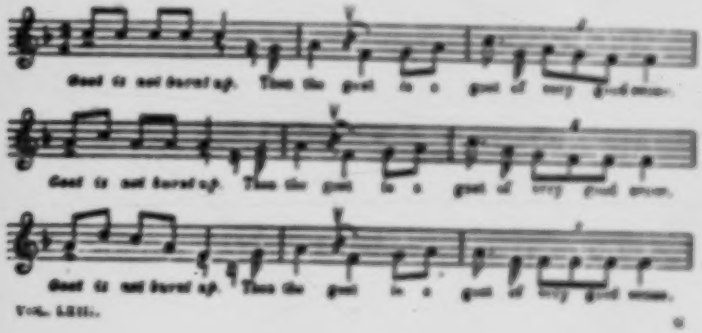
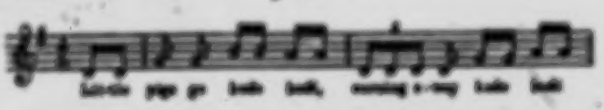

dust is not burnt up. Then the goat is a goat of very good sense.
dust is not burnt up. Then the goat is a goat of very good sense.
dust is not burnt up. Then the goat is a goat of very good sense.

Dada F324
Mdud. F324
Lolwkd F317

190 A. K. Tucker.—Children's Games and Songs in the Southern Sudan.

Very often the sad boy will stand still, and the rest of the line then proceeds to sway itself round him, singing:—

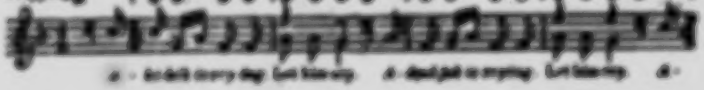


The whole game is done at the double, and is played much faster than among the Ashuli. The words have nothing to do with the game, being, as often as not, reminders on favourites bulls.

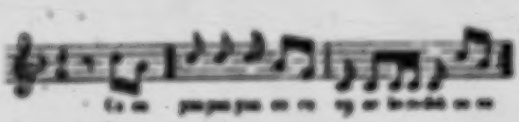
Aswa Version.

14. *Changes and Avenues.* The versions of this popular game differ from tribe to tribe, but all have this feature in common, viz., the two principals stand facing each other with their arms making an arch; they do not clasp each other's hands, but clap their palms against each other to a rapid rhythm, while the other members of the game dash through the arch. The game is considerably more vigorous than among European children, and the "last man" is seldom captured without a scuffle.

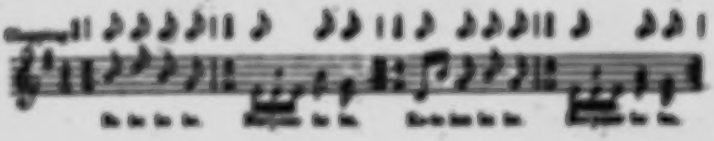
Skiltah:



Lotuho:



Ashuli:

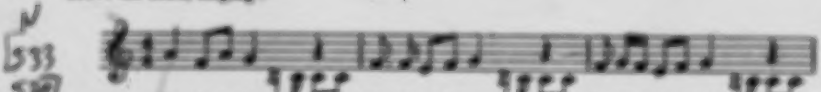


The "last man" is treated variously. Among the Skiltah he is banished from the game, until the combatants until only two players are left, and these have to chase each other. Among the Lotuho and Ashuli the game proceeds upon more European lines. The captured player is

?/Tucker K-5 (1929-1933) 1933 F323 Shilluk F323
Nuer F322

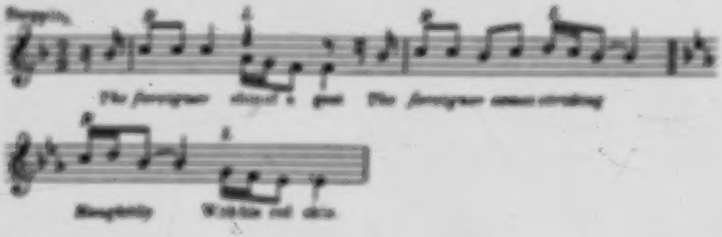
Love Games.

N 524 18. *Nute and May.*—The Nuers have a form of this game of which the details are rather vague. The children stand in two lines, facing each other, some dozen yards apart. A member of one line advances towards the other line with a peculiar prancing step, waving his hands above his head, singing :—

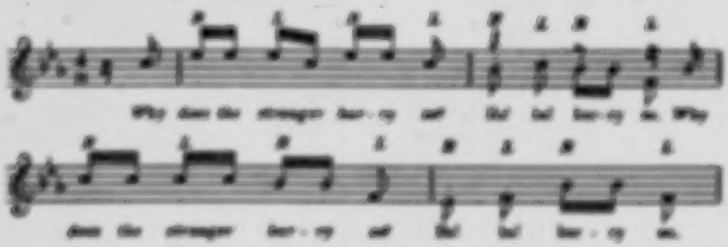


(The words, so far as I could make out, are meaningless.) He singles out a member of the other side and chases him round both lines and back to his place. What happens if he catches him I could not find out.

S 524 533 539 The following Shilluk version is evidently a recent invention, and probably confined to the particular group of Shilluks I was studying. The boys line up in two ranks, as if for "Nute and May." One line advances towards the other, marching slowly in "goose step" (see Fig. 4, Pl. XVI), while the other line retreats, both sides singing :—



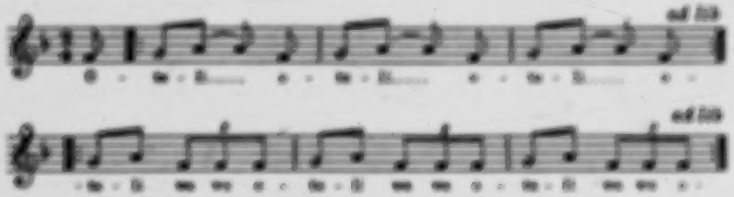
Then the song is repeated, while the other line advances, and so on, to and fro, several times. Suddenly the pace is doubled; the boys running still legged, those advancing trying to kick the shins of those who are retreating. The song now is :—



As before, on every repetition the direction is changed.

7/Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933 F323 Shilluk F323
Bari: F35
Nuba 194
Lango F217
Acholi 107

This game is definitely a bit at the white man. The "skin of a goat" in the first song refers to the hoards of the R.C. missionaries (wards being considered commonly among the Nilotic tribes); while the kicking in the second song is thought to be a skit on the average official's use of his boots when angry or impatient.

19. *Holding one's Breath.*—A much more popular line game among all tribes is that of holding one's breath for a certain period. The Shilluk play it as follows. The boys line up in two ranks as if for "Nuts and May." One boy on one side places the tips of the fingers of one hand on top of his head, takes a deep breath, and proceeds to walk briskly round the other line of boys and back to his own place, chanting in step:—

without drawing breath until he gets back. If he shakes in his voice catches, the rest chase after him and pinch his arms. The boys go out alternately from each side in turn, but one boy must not wait till his neighbour is in before setting out himself. If too many boys get back safely, the lines withdraw till a greater distance separates them.

Not all tribes sing for this game. The Dinka and Latuko merely march round humming on one note and plucking their noses at intervals. The Acholi sing the following song:—

the "Ka . . ." being protracted until the boy is back in his place.

Imitation of Animals, etc.

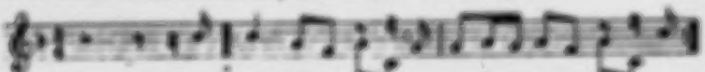
Though really coming under a different category, the following two games are included here by virtue of their songs:—

20. *Buck-hunt in a Trap.* (*See* Figs. 5 and 6, Pl. XVI.) This game is played by the Azande, and its success depends entirely on how the principal player can imitate the animal's movements. The boys stand in a ring, holding hands. One boy is in the middle, and he is "Ghoali,"

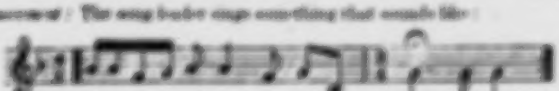
7/Tucker E-6 (1929-1933) 1933 F323 Skittish F323
Archol. F.U.N
Lettuce Perf

16. Shingee.—The most clever animal caricature I have seen was among the Hillah. One boy crouches down and is entirely muffled in clothes. Over his head, from front to back, he holds a stick, grasping it with both hands just in front of his forehead. The stick is also covered with a cloth, and the front end tied with string, so that the crouching figure looks like some great bird with a long bill. (Fig. 4, Pl. XVII.)

First movement: The bird solemnly nods its head, while all sing:—



Second movement: The song-leader sings something that sounds like:



At the word "Turn," which is emphasized and drawn out, the bird draws its long beak round to one side, giving it a most inquisitive look.

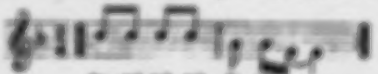
Third movement: The song-leader shouts "Lubo-lubo-lubo!" The bird at once goes rapidly on the ground.

This is a real nature study. The bird here caricatured is known as the "Shingee"—a long-beak little bird, with an air of stupid solemnity, and the three successive described above are characteristic. No one who has seen the bird could fail to recognise it in the boys' game.

17. Crane.—The boys sit in a line, some dozen or so of them, each with his feet on either side of the boy in front, as though tobogganing. They sing, rocking gently from side to side:—

Suddenly the song-leader shouts "The boat is sinking! the boat is sinking!" With a concerted cry of "Bright!" the whole line leans over on to one side. They recover, and lean over on to the other side. They recover, and lean over backwards, after which the boat resumes its interrupted journey. (Fig. 5, Pl. XVII.)

Strangely enough, I have met with a similar game among the Ichoh and Lattoo, although both are inland tribes. Among the Ichoh the boys sit one behind the other, as in the Skittish version, while the song-leader walks round with a strong stick in his hand. At a given moment he places the stick against the shoulders of the squatting boys and sings:—



T.Tucker E-6 (1929-1933) 1933 F323 Shelfmk F323
Barg: F35
M.Hu F318

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. LXIII, 1933, Plate XV.

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T:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933), 1933

F223 Shilluk F223
Azande F07
Dinka F32
Lotuko F317

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. LXIII, 1933, Plate XVI

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CHILDREN'S GAMES AND SONGS IN THE SOUTHERN SUDAN.

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7:Tucker E-5 (1929-1933) 1933

F321 Shilluk F321
Azande F97
Lotuko F317
Ina. P34

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. LXIII, 1933, Plate XVII.

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FIG. 1.—DANCE "OKUDO."

FIG. 2.—LOTUKO "OTUNYU."

FIG. 3.—ATO "OSAL."

FIG. 4.—MELUTO "OKUDO."

FIG. 5.—MELUTO "AJUNG."

FOLLOWER'S CLOSED AND HANDS OF THE SUPPORTING GIRLS.

Ep. 157(d)